

Yellow
21 Aug. '56

Executive Assistant to the Director

Acting Deputy Director (Support)

Information Furnished the DCI by the Office of Training on
Readability of Office Memoranda.

1. I agree thoroughly that readability is primarily the result of simple, clear, well organized writing, as pointed out by Miss [redacted] of the Office of Training in her study on Readability of Office Memoranda. 25X1A9a

2. In July 1955 Colonel White wrote to the heads of all major DA components, urging them to train their employees in writing clear and simple English. Such training should consist of (a) good example, (b) study of "Plain Letters," a handbook setting forth most of the organization principles advocated by Miss [redacted] and (c) taking the DA course in Effective Writing. He has also emphasized at his staff meetings the necessity for plain, work-day English. 25X1A9a

3. I also agree with her that format must be judiciously adapted to organization and subject matter. For example, the standard format for staff studies has proven very well adapted for submitting problems for decision or action. 25X1A9a

4. Generally, Miss [redacted] suggestions for improvement in format conform with standards published by the Agency, with the biggest exception being line length and, to a lesser degree, techniques for providing emphasis. About five million pages of typewritten material were produced in headquarters in F.Y. 1956. The use of four-inch lines would increase the volume by approximately one-third. The annual increase in costs would be about \$9,000 for paper and over \$100,000 for safes to store the increased volume. It is difficult to estimate the increased clerical costs.

5. Emphasis should be achieved mainly through the arrangement of words and ideas without too much reliance upon exclamation marks, capital letters, underlinings, etc. as advocated in a manual published by the Office of Training.

6. We will continue to use all available means to improve the readability of memoranda produced in the DA Area and to use all productive ideas, including Miss [redacted] in Agency training courses. 25X1A9a

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